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DE RUEHBU #2372 3541847
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 201847Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9947
INFO RUCNMER/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1642
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 002372

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SENSITIVE
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ARGENTINE CONGRESS CONDEMNS U.S. ALLEGATIONS,
NESTOR KEEPS ON GOING, AND A KEY WITNESS CLAIMS
ANTONINI-WILSON WAS AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE ON AUGUST 6

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 2360 AND PREVIOUS

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Kirchner-controlled Congress moved with exceptional alacrity December 19 to repudiate the U.S. for offending Argentina, and former president Nestor Kirchner continued to berate the USG, but singling out former WHA A/S Roger Noriega for vitriol. Meanwhile, according to press reports, an Argentine prosecutor confirmed that she had testimony from a key witness placing Antonini-Wilson at the presidential palace two days after his \$800,000 suitcase was intercepted. End summary.

Congress Takes Action

¶2. (SBU) The Argentine Congress, where President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner (CFK) has a strong majority in both the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, voted December 19 to "repudiate" the U.S. for affronting Argentina in connection with the Miami arrests of Venezuela's unregistered agents. The Congress criticized the USG for failing to extradite Antonini-Wilson and instead "mounting a harmful intelligence operation that sought to damage the institution of the presidency of our nation." The Chamber approved the resolution by a vote of 128 to 64 (17 abstentions), and the Senate voted 51 to 16 (one abstention) to approve. None of the opposition voted for the resolution. The opposition instead sought, but failed to win, the interpellation of FM Taiana, presidential chief of staff Alberto Fernandez, and Justice Minister Anibal Fernandez.

Kirchner Keeps on Going

¶3. (SBU) Former president and First Gentleman Nestor Kirchner resumed his harsh criticism of the USG. At a year-end event for municipal governments, Kirchner criticized the USG's "bad attitude," alleging it sought through the media "to wear down recently inaugurated governments to keep them from joining forces." He called on all Argentines to "defend and help" the maligned CFK. According to "La Nacion," Kirchner's "main target" was former WHA A/S Roger Noriega. Kirchner said "the Guantanamo case made certain sorry officials like Noriega nervous" and blamed him for "doing nothing but putting stumbling blocks in my way since he was always opposed to Latin American integration." Kirchner then criticized Argentina's political opposition for "not having any ideas," and claimed Elisa Carrio, the runner-up in the October 28 presidential election, was "an employee of Noriega" not worthy of debating.

Antonini-Wilson at the Palace

¶4. (SBU) Several major media outlets began reporting December 20 that Argentine prosecutor Maria Luz Rivas-Diez claimed that Victoria Beresziuk, a GOA employee who was aboard the August 4 flight carrying the \$800,000 suitcase from Caracas, had testified that two days later she saw Antonini-Wilson at the presidential palace, Casa Rosada. According to Beresziuk's testimony, Antonini-Wilson was spotted at a signing ceremony in Casa Rosada on August 6 (the day of Chavez's visit to Argentina).

WAYNE